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Clean Grain Notes

for Cooperators in Clean Grain Program

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FEDERAL EXTENSION SERVICE

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NO. 8

SEIZURES: Despite continued Clean Grain educational efforts, Food and Drug Administration is still finding wheat contaminated by insects and rodents.

FDA reports seizing 68 carloads of contaminated wheat in 1959. This was below 1958's record total of 79 but still represents a tremendous loss. FDA has seized 225 carloads of wheat since January, 1955.

During 1959, Montana had the most seizures--22. Ohio was next with 10; Nebraska had 9; Michigan, 6; Indiana, 4; South Dakota, 4; North Dakota, 3; Illinois, 3; Kansas, 3; Wyoming, 2; Idaho, 1; and Iowa, 1.

GRAIN IS CLEANER: Although the grain seizures might not show it, State and Federal grain inspection and grading reports indicate that grain is cleaner now than it was several years ago when Extension and industry leadership combined to launch an extensive program to encourage and promote clean grain. Seizures have increased in recent years mainly because enforcement is better and tolerance has been lowered.

Evidence that grain is cleaner now can be seen in FDA's sampling report for 1958-59 which reveals that 3.25 per cent of the cars contained one or more rodent pellets per pint, compared to 4.9 per cent with this degree of contamination during 1950-51. However, it should also be pointed out that during 1955-56, only 2.1 per cent of the cars contained one or more rodent pellets per pint.

Consequently, unless there's renewed interest in the Clean Grain program, progress may diminish.

OTHER SEIZURES: Diversion of poisonous fungicide-treated seed grains to food use has also brought forth some real problems. Since the start of the Clean Grain program, FDA has seized 33 carloads of wheat contaminated with mercurials--plus 6 carloads of barley, 6 carloads of oats, and 5 carloads of corn.

FDA says that it appears some growers and elevator operators have been showing "considerable disregard" in the handling of so-called "pink wheat," and other grains treated with poisonous fungicides. Last year

alone, FDA seized 10 carloads of wheat containing mercurial residues. FDA assures continuing regulatory efforts in this field.

HIGHLIGHTS: You may be interested in the following summary of Extension Service Clean Grain activities last year in several States:

Arkansas -- The Extension Service and U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service are working together to conduct intensive county-wide rat control programs in several counties. Vocational agricultural teachers are cooperating in promotional activities, educational meetings, and distribution of bait. Farm Bureaus financed the materials for the bait to be sold to individual farmers and home owners.

Educational work is being carried out by newspaper articles, radio programs, window posters, and circular letters. Also meetings to explain the need and means of carrying out such control programs are being held.

Illinois -- Extension entomologists inaugurated a program to control Angoumois grain moth in stored earcorn. Objectives were: (1) to inform farmers of the value of a protectant, (2) to demonstrate the effectiveness of a newly-approved insecticide, malathion, and (3) to show farmers how to apply a protectant.

Farm advisers in a five-county area were contacted and agreed to help with this program. They set up control demonstrations on 14 farms. Also, the problem of grain insect control was discussed at winter meetings. Several news releases and radio broadcasts on the subject were prepared.

Results have been favorable. Approximately 20 per cent of the Illinois farmers who store wheat on their farms now use malathion as a protectant against grain infesting insects.

Iowa -- Eight central Iowa counties took rat control as special 4-H activity. Objectives were: (1) to impress 4-H members with the idea that rat control on farms must be a continuing program, and (2) to get information on the amount of rat damage per farm, the number rats per farm, and the rat-poisoning practices of farmers.

4-H leaders were trained at county training schools. The flannelgraph kit put out by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, a set of 18 2 x 2 color slides, and various types of bait stations were used in the training sessions. Leaders used these materials for 10 to 15 minute sessions at each club meeting from October through March.

Entomologists hope to establish continuous rat poisoning as a practice on all farms and in all communities. Working toward this goal they used: (1) leader training (11 meetings with 269 people), (2) youth participation (2,200 4-H members), (3) demonstrations, (4) 4 TV programs, (5) 11 radio programs, and (6) 12 news stories.

Nebraska -- Extension promoted grain sanitation by circular letters, meetings, radio programs, television programs, news releases, and rat control demonstrations. One county set up a county-wide rat control program as a result of information and demonstrations provided as part of the Clean Grain program.

Oklahoma -- A survey of farm stored grain in the North Central area showed only a few bins heavily infested. Most grain storage areas were found free of all insects.

Oregon -- Result demonstrations have convinced elevator operators and farmers in several counties of the advantage of controlling stored grain insect pests. Most elevator operators now clean out their bins thoroughly as the grain is shipped and apply residual insecticides. Fumigants and grain protectants are being used more extensively.

The Northwest Grain Sanitation Committee cooperating with entomologists of the University of Idaho, Washington State College, and Oregon State College prepared a bulletin on controlling stored grain insect pests suitable for use in the northwest States. Also, posters were prepared and distributed to elevators throughout these three States.

Several radio broadcasts and news letters on controlling insect pests of stored grain were also prepared.

South Dakota -- At the State level, Clean Grain received special emphasis on radio and television programs, at general meetings, at grain schools for elevator operators, in news articles and circular letters, in a mimeographed circular on insect control, and at displays on stored grain insects at crop shows.

A report on the South Dakota Clean Grain program was presented at a regional marketing conference in Minneapolis.

Also, Extension made Clean Grain information available to 4-H members.

County agents from 10 counties met at a regional conference to plan ways of carrying on clean grain work in their counties.

Texas -- Extension entomologists worked with a team of specialists on stored grain problems in district and sub-district training meetings for county agents. The entomologists also conducted a number of demonstrations on fumigations of stored grain. County agents conducted over 556 demonstrations and held 279 meetings with an attendance of 4,227.

RODENT CONTROL SURVEY: Bernie Kooser, Midwest Information Center, Corn Industries Research Foundation, Box 296, Ames, Iowa, is making a survey of rodent control techniques in the Corn Belt States. He was invited to make the survey at the recent meeting of North Central States Extension Directors at Columbus, Ohio.

As he comes across techniques, programs, and other information on rodent control he thinks useful, he'll pass the information along to the Extension Service.

MALATHION APPROVED FOR STORED GRAINS: Agricultural Marketing Service researchers announced recently that malathion is a safe and economical treatment for low levels of insect infestation and damage in stored grain. Premium grade malathion spray or dust, applied at time of storage, will effectively protect grain for a full storage season, provided recommended procedures are followed. The five-year AMS studies showed that malathion had no effect on the odor or flavor of bread made from treated wheat. And it did not impair germination of seed or grain. Researchers warn, though, that this treatment is not a substitute for fumigation to control heavy insect infestation in grain.

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